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ABSTRACT

Papers presented on social work education in Britain include: Current developments in social work education (P.H. Young); selection of students (M. Elizabeth Edwards); the management of curriculum development (J. Snelling); the management of a social work department (M.J. McAllister); current issues and developments in social work training (D.C.G. Davies). The synopsis of an open discussion is included. (MSE)

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Coombe Lodge Report

Vol 7 No 9

Study Conference 74/208

Social Work Education

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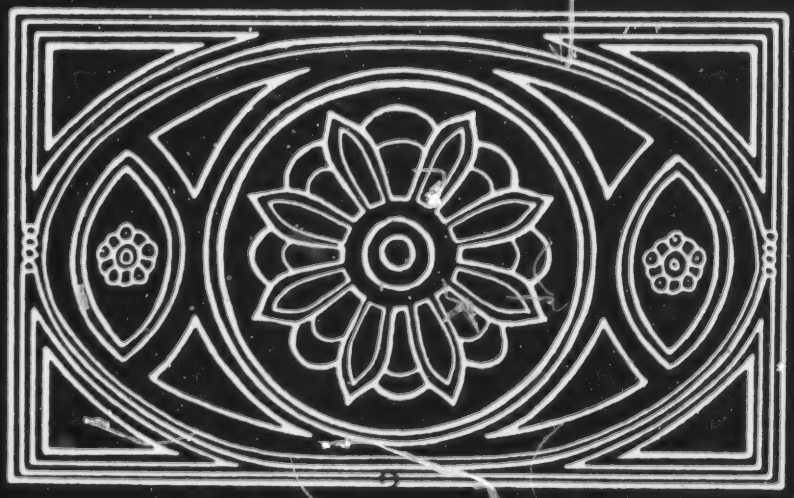

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Study Conference 74/208

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FOREWORD

Senior academic staff in college departments offering courses leading to the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work met at Coombe Lodge in 1974 for a short conference in order to examine their current problems. Discussion sessions focussed on three main areas: firstly, a review of current developments; secondly, the methods employed and the policy issues involved in the selection of students; and thirdly, the problems involved in the introduction of modular course structures.

Speakers addressed the conference on a number of issues: current developments in social work education; the selection of students, the management of curriculum development, the management of a social work department and current issues and developments in social work practice.

The final session of the conference took the form of an open forum in which a panel of speakers led the discussion on a number of aspects of social work education.

A description of the new CQSW course at the College of Food Technology and Commerce, Cardiff is included as an appendix to the Report.

Miss P H F Young,
Director,
Central Council for
Education & Training
in Social Work

CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

"The Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work is aware that it seems a remote, incommunicative and intolerably slow-to-act body to many people involved in social work who are anxious to know what developments are taking place. I hope that this paper, which will give an indication of current developments from the point of view of the Council, will go some way towards rectifying the situation.

role and membership of the Council

First, however, some brief details about the Council itself: it is an independent body established in 1971 with statutory authority to promote education and training in all fields of social work, to recognise training courses and to award qualifications. It has no direct control over resources for social work courses. The Council replaced two previous training councils in the fields of health and welfare and the care of children and young people and the training committee of the Advisory Council for Probation and After-Care. Therefore there was a great deal of rationalisation needed in order to establish a single pattern of social work education for all the social services.

Council progress since 1971

Taking 'current developments' to include those which have occurred since 1971 I would suggest that among the most important are:

1. The decision taken by central government that the responsibility for financing social work courses be transferred to the University Grants Committee and the local education authorities as from August 1973. Until then the relevant Councils had been directly responsible for much of the funding of child care and probation training. With this transfer of responsibility all resources for social work education now have to be fought for in competition with courses in other fields. It is true that the Council can bring influence to bear if social work courses are in danger of being cut back, but to do so it must be armed with hard statistical data.

2. The Council set out to promote an expansion in the professional training of social workers, bearing in mind a number of policies. Firstly, it tries to ensure an equal balance of graduates and non-graduates in student intake. Secondly, it aims at an eventual intake of 4,000 students on professional courses (this figure refers only to courses for field workers and does not include courses for residential and day care staff). Thirdly, the Council endeavours to match up the needs of the different social services with the educational resources available, the training needs of different types of

student including mature students, and regional needs. Therefore, unlike the CNAA, the Council not only has the responsibility of course approval but also has to actively promote social work courses.

3. The Council set up a working party to consider the training of residential social workers, on the initiative of several members who were aware of the enormous training needs of residential staff. At present only a few courses lead to the award of a Certificate of Qualification in Social Work. The working party's report to the Council is a major document although, with the exception of one or two proposals, it has not so far been adopted as Council policy.

4. The Secretary of State's decision in July 1973 that the Council should assume responsibility for the training of day-centre staff has much potential impact on social work education. Day-care, in the context it was used, referred mainly to the work of staff at day centres for adult mentally and physically handicapped people and the elderly. Initially there had been a proposal for this area of social work to come under a separate council but the Secretary of State thought it appropriate for the CCETSW to take on this responsibility. As the Council is responsible for training in all the social work services, day-care, in the Council's terms, cannot mean only day centres for the handicapped and elderly and immediately the Secretary of State's announcement was made the opportunity arose, for discussion and negotiation at least, of day-care facilities for children, day-care centres which the probations service is beginning to develop and so on. Therefore in effect the Council is now responsible for day, residential and field social workers and their training throughout the social services. This embraces a vast number of individuals and the figure will increase if local authorities' 10 year expansion plans come to fruition.

5. Developments are taking place with regard to the recognition of qualifications held by social workers who have trained and qualified overseas.

external developments

The developments which have taken place in the Council have done so in a setting which itself has been changing, and some of these external changes have considerable implications for the development of social work education.

1. The actual formation of the Council was itself part of the legislation which set up the unified social services department. Unfortunately as a result of the unification of the training departments coming after the reorganisation of the social services agencies, a considerable backlog of training needs had already built up before the CCETSW was established.

2. The Personal Social Services Council has recently been established. This has been one of the missing links in the totality of policy planning bodies relating to social work education and therefore until now there has been no opportunity for debate over such matters as priorities in allocating resources to different areas of training provision.

3. Major expansion and some changes have taken place in the probation and after-care service. Therefore the Council is now asking colleges whether they would be prepared to take probation officer trainees on qualifying courses which did not previously accept such students. A large number of such courses are now taking small numbers of probation officer trainees.

4. Local government reorganisation inevitably produces problems concerned with social work training. It has been difficult for local authority social service departments to give any indication of their future training needs or resources over the period of reorganisation.

5. Social work support for the health service has now become the responsibility of local authorities in England and Wales - as yet it is difficult to establish what the training needs of such workers, employed by the local authorities and working in hospitals or other community health services, will be.

6. The Government White Paper on Education, 'A Framework for Expansion', proposed the redistribution and expansion of resources for higher education and this has obvious implications for the development of social work education. One effect is that colleges of education are asking the Council whether they can offer social work courses. In agreement with the DES the Council has stated that no decisions can be made at present. We believe that it is not possible for colleges which until now have had no involvement in the training needs of social workers to produce a satisfactory course without some reorientation of existing staff - these colleges may well be a useful resource for running courses at some time in the future.

7. The Local Government Training Board have recommended in a Report on the training of Education Welfare Officers that they should be trained social workers. If this recommendation is put into practice some colleges of education would seem a possible location for training courses for these workers.

executive functions

The Council's activities so far have nearly all laid emphasis on the statutory responsibilities and the executive functions of the Council. For instance one of its first concerns was the unification of the awards given to qualified social workers. It was agreed that all students who successfully completed a course recognised by the Council would be eligible for the award of the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work regardless of whether they are graduates, non-graduates or taking a CNAA degree course which incorporates professional training. As the Council operates under statutory training rules concerning, for example, assessment and entry requirements, documents relating to these rules have been produced. The Council has also adopted a policy which will promote more than one level of training in accordance with the recommendations of the working party studying residential care.

curriculum development

I believe that the Council should also turn its attention to the promotion of curriculum developments. If it fails to do this, it risks becoming an educational bureaucracy, not really concerned with the core of professional education. One of the main constraints the Council suffers from in its role of promoting social work training is a lack of resources. Its staff of 28 are already stretched in merely trying to cope with the rationalisation of social work education. Nevertheless, some progress has been made on this front: a document on legal studies for social work students has been produced; other documents are being prepared on the teaching of community work; and a working party has recently been studying developing trends in social work for handicapped people.

temporary problems

Naturally, the reorganisation of social work training gives rise to certain temporary difficulties. There has been a certain amount of confusion over where responsibilities lie, for example. Unlike many award-giving bodies the Council is not directly involved in the examination of individual students - it does not set examinations nor provide examiners. The Council has decided to reduce its involvement still further and will no longer appoint or pay external examiners, this responsibility now being devolved to the colleges, which have to develop the ability to cope with this new responsibility. In the universities, which have always been completely independent in examining their students, there are different problems. The fact that their students receive a CQSW award in addition to their own qualifications is really of marginal interest to them. But if university students fail to be awarded the CQSW they may well appeal to the Council and this can cause a most uneasy situation. Therefore the Council's task is to ensure that the universities are fully aware that they are operating in relation to a statutory body with statutory training rules, and there must be clear understanding between the college conducting the examination and the Council making the award. Any change that the Council may request of the university regarding, perhaps, overall content of courses, balance of different types of work and assessment procedures must go through the lengthy procedure of approval by the Senate. Although this is a cumbersome measure, it is essential for the CQSW course and examination must have the approval of the institution as a whole. Any appeal by the student will therefore fall within normal college procedures. This is far more important now than when the Council was directly involved in the assessment of CQSW students.

course content

With regard to course content, three major trends can be identified. Firstly, there is a move towards the provision of a basic general qualification in social work rather than a qualification which is subject based. One implication of this is that as every college cannot offer every option to every kind of student; each will offer the basic general elements but add its own flavour and special opportunities. If we are to develop a basic qualification we must also provide opportunities for further training for holders of the basic qualification. This type of training provision of, perhaps, courses lasting one term, will consist of up-dating courses and courses in specialised areas of concern, e.g. child abuse. It is intended that there will also be advanced training provided for about 10% of qualified social workers.

A second trend is that some courses are moving away from a concentration solely on case work to include the study of group and community work. Thirdly, the Council has decided that qualifying training for residential social work shall be the same length and lead to the same qualification as that for field work.

The issue with which the Council is currently involved is an attempt to identify the core element which designates a course as being a social work course, and without which the CQSW cannot be awarded."

Discussion Arising

Dip HE

What was the Council's attitude to the Dip HE? Miss Young replied that the Council did not envisage validating the Dip HE as a qualifying training for social work. Nor did it think it would be right for the Dip HE to be deliberately planned as a preparation for social work. The reasons were that the Council did not wish to promote social work training for young people who had only just left school and if the Dip HE were tailored for students who expected to go on to a shortened social work course later it would become too rigidly structured.

teacher training

A comment was made about the difficulty of recruiting social work teachers in view of the many other demands on social workers. Miss Young thought the main difficulty lay in the shortage of training provision for social workers who might be attracted to teaching. Perhaps provision would improve if more use were made by social workers of college of education facilities. The Council was moving towards the establishment of a regional team of staff for the CQSW and this might also lead to an increase in teaching provision on a regional basis.

one year post-graduate courses

One member suggested that there was a paradox in social work provision. There was an increase in the amount of material which needed to be absorbed by a student training for social work and an explosion in the amount of different types of job they would go into. Surely, therefore, it was foolish to expect a social work training to be achieved in a one year post-graduate course. Would it not be better to include some aspects of social work education alongside other studies in an undergraduate course, thus reducing the bulk of work to be studied after graduation and allowing social work skills to develop gradually? Miss Young replied that the Council had no authority over pre-professional courses. Although the Council did approve a certain number of four year degree courses which included social work training it did not want students of eighteen to embark on a course which would have currency only for social work as they should be able to change their minds about their future careers if they wished.

Dr M Elizabeth Edwards,
Principal Lecturer in
Social Work
Middlesex Polytechnic

SELECTION OF STUDENTS

"The first part of my paper will be concerned with a review of the objectives of student selection. Then I shall consider the criteria of selection: to this end, the descriptive and the evaluative approaches to selection research will be reviewed.

Finally, the methods of selection for professional education in social work which are used in Britain and the United States will be discussed, and special reference will be made to the role of the interview.

The Objectives of Selection

Courses in professional education guard entry into the professions. In social work, as in all other professions those who are responsible for the selection of students make decisions which have far-reaching effects on the lives of applicants.

The most basic question facing selectors is: are they primarily to look for reasons why applicants should be accepted for professional education, or are they to search for reasons why some should be rejected? Are they to screen in or to screen out applicants? Though in a sense these contrasting views are two sides of the same coin, a lot depends in the selection process on which side is uppermost.

One way of arriving at admissions decisions is to determine the criteria of selection, and then to examine the available evidence on applicants (this may or may not include interviews) to assess the extent to which these are met. If at this stage the available information provides no strong evidence of an applicant's unsuitability, he would then be offered a place. Where the admissions decision is made on this "selecting in" principle it follows that, where necessary, "selecting out" would have to be done on the basis of performance on the course itself.

A contrasting approach to selection is to examine very closely the evidence available on each applicant and then to decide whether any of this contra-indicates admission. Decisions made in this way err on the side of safety, and the number of applicants considered to be risks are kept to the minimum. Where admissions decisions are based on this policy, there is a heavy investment in getting students through the programme successfully, and any failure to do so is to some extent experienced by staff as a reflection upon their capacity to make sound judgements.

From the viewpoint of the applicant the first approach to selection is probably the more attractive, since it appears to be a fair and open system which gives the candidate who is not outstanding a good chance of being chosen. However, for the particularly talented applicant who does not apply early to a course with a limited number of places, the first come first served way in which this approach is usually implemented may result in his being rejected. It is therefore possible that it favours the middle of the road candidate who submits his papers in good time. No doubt the outstanding late applicant might be offered a place, but the possibility which arises in implementing this approach is that a course does not select from its pool of applicants those who are most likely to perform well.

From the point of view of staff this approach to selection has certain attractions: in particular, by limiting the area of subjective judgement in predicting the applicant's future performance, the power of the individual staff member as guardian of entry to the profession is reduced. However, it follows if selection is based on this screening in policy that the number of students who do not reach

the required standard of performance is likely to be larger. Not only does this mean that certain places on courses are wasted, but there is also the possibility that the distress which failure brings to the student might have been averted. If a more careful, a more selective, selection procedure had been adopted, could this disappointment have been avoided?

These two contrasting approaches to selection have been discussed not because both are currently in use in Britain, but in order that we should not take for granted that the way we do things (which is, almost without exception, to use the "selecting out" approach) is the only possible way in which they could be done. On the contrary, in the United States, it is at present much more common to adopt the more open "selecting in" approach. There are three reasons for this. Firstly, the cost of travelling to selection interviews in a continent 3,000 miles wide is prohibitive for applicants. Secondly, the use of the selection interview is extremely expensive in terms of the time put aside for this purpose by professional and administrative staff. And thirdly, research has shown that the percentage of students who succeed on professional social work courses is not increased when the interview is used as an instrument of selection.

The reasons which have led most schools of social work in the United States to base their admissions decisions on different principles than ours do not - or do not yet - obtain in this country. Distances are not so great that applicants cannot afford to travel for selection interviews; as yet, complaints of the high cost of interviews in terms of the time of professional and secretarial staff have not reached noticeable proportions; and almost no research has been undertaken into the effect of selection interviews on admissions decisions. (I understand that an experiment whereby some applicants are accepted without interviews is currently being undertaken at Birmingham University).

In the absence of a clearly stated policy in favour of selecting in or selecting out applicants, the choice between these alternatives is usually governed by the laws of supply and demand. Where the demand for admission to courses is inadequate to utilise the number of places available, there is a tendency to scrutinize every applicant in the anxious hope that he will prove suitable. And conversely, where the demand for admission exceeds the number of available places, some applicants are rejected on the basis of their written materials, while others more favoured are invited to appear for selection interviews. Since for the large majority of professional social work courses which are currently offered in this country there are considerably more applicants than available places, most courses try to decide who to reject so that they are left with the "best" out of the total pool of applicants. In this way those responsible for admissions try to ensure that their educational resources are used economically. The most economic use of resources is achieved when those students who are admitted complete their courses satisfactorily. Thus, the purpose of selection can be defined as making admissions decisions which lead to accepting the maximum number of applicants who are likely to succeed, and the minimum who are likely to fail.

the success criterion

It appears logical to think that the task of those who select students for professional education would be facilitated if the characteristics of competent practitioners were known. However, in several professions it has been found that the level of competence shown in later practice and the degree of success attained in professional education are not associated. That this is so has been established in the fields of psychiatry [1] the ministry of religion, [2] and engineering [3]. In social work Hess demonstrated in an American study that the rank order of students in graduate school was not related to the order in which their later performance in casework was ranked, [4] and Moon, in an English study of medical social workers, found that there was a

> "substantial difference between the number of students who were assessed potentially very good medical social workers by their tutors, and those who proved to be so in the eyes of their head medical social workers." [5]

The discrepancies between attributes associated with a high level of performance in professional education and those associated with later competence in practice led Deutschberger to observe that selectors tend to make a double prediction about the applicant: one is an estimate of his probable success in meeting the demands of the educational programme, and the other is his capacity for, and potential contribution to, practice. He pleaded for a delimitation of the task of selectors to choosing those who would be able to succeed in the educational programme, and considered that it was the responsibility of the profession as a whole (not of admissions staff alone) to work towards bringing the educational programme and practice into closer relationship [6].

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1 Robert R. Holt and Lester Luborsky, Personality Patterns of Psychiatrists (New York: Basic Books, 1958), 2 vols.

2 George G. Stern, et al., Methods in Personality Assessment (Illinois: Press, 1956), p.87.

3 Calvin W. Taylor and Frank Barron, eds., Scientific Creativity (New York: John Wiley, 1961), pp. 73 and 75.

4 Dolph Hess, "Prediction of Success in Casework Practice from Performance in the Graduate Program" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, School of Social Work, University of Minnesota, 1966). Statement taken from Social Service Review, 40 (September 1966), p.330.

5 Marjorie Moon, The First Two Years (London: Institute of Medical Social Workers, 1965), p.66.

6 Mary Ella Robertson, et al., Admission to Graduate Social Work in Education (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1969), pp.16-21.

two approaches to selection research in the United States

The search for knowledge about the attributes of those who complete their professional education in social work has not, as yet, been undertaken in Britain. In the United States it has proceeded along two different lines and a review of some American studies may be of interest and use to us. The first line of enquiry represents a descriptive or sociological approach, by which characteristics of an objective or verifiable nature relating to the demographic, social educational and economic circumstances of students are collected with the object of determining whether there is a relationship between any of these factors and success or failure. The second approach is more evaluative or psychological in nature, and is concerned to discover whether certain personal, inner factors which can only be inferred from attitudes and behaviour are associated with the outcome of social work education.

the descriptive approach

The association between various descriptive characteristics of social work students and their later performance has been a subject of enquiry among several people. This review considers some of the findings of six persons, five of whom made domestic studies at the schools where they were employed; the size of their samples ranged from 37 to 311. The remaining study, conducted by Berengarten for the Council on Social Work Education, was based on information relating to 2,629 students admitted to 59 schools of social work in North America in 1961-62.[7] The findings of these studies are not without interest and potential usefulness to people making admissions decisions.

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7 The following are the studies which are discussed in detail:

Edward W. Francel, "Factors Associated with the Successful Outcome of Professional Training for Social Work" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, School of Social Work, University of Minnesota, 1960).

Dorothea Gilbert, "Social Work Students and Their Educational Outcome" (unpublished DSW dissertation, School of Social Work, University of Pennsylvania, 1963).

Margaret Schubert, "Admission Decisions", Social Service Review, 37, 2 (June, 1963), pp. 154-165; "Admissions Decisions: Repetition of a Study", Social Service Review, 38, 2 (June, 1964), pp. 147-152.

Helen L. Olander, "Selection of Students for Social Work Education" (unpublished DSW dissertation School of Social Work, University of Southern California, 1964).

Sidney Berengarten, Admissions Prediction and Student Performance in Social Work Education (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1964).

Rhoda G. Samat, "Prediction versus Performance in Student Selection", Social Work Education Reporter, 16, 1 (March, 1968), pp. 45-46, 59-61.

Among all five people who studied it there is agreement on the association between success in social work education and the level of performance (as measured in the grade point average) previously attained in undergraduate work. This is the descriptive characteristic which is most highly correlated with success. A close second is that of belonging to the female sex, a factor which was found in four out of five studies to be significantly associated with success. This indicates that the women who at present enter professional education for social work continue to be of a higher intellectual calibre than the men. [8] Age was found to be not significantly associated with success in two studies, while in the remaining three there was agreement that the success rate was high among those who were under twenty-five years. Experience of employment in social work prior to entering social work education was not significantly associated with success, although in two studies it was found that those who had less than two years' experience of social work before starting their courses performed well.

Although in these studies some interesting information came to light about the association between specific characteristics and success in social work education, on the whole the results of this line of enquiry were somewhat disappointing to those who pursued it. The fact that so little agreement was reached between the findings of different studies seemed to indicate that this approach was unlikely to yield much information which could be utilised at the point of selection.

The main deficiency of this approach was that it did not permit of any links being made between the attributes which were being studied and their effect on the individual applicant. For example, the fact of being a specific age is of significance to selectors mainly for the way in which it influences an applicant's perception of himself and the way in which he behaves towards others: the 22-year old may range from being withdrawn, preoccupied with his own feelings and afraid of expending himself in relation to others, to being a person whose interest and concern for others enables him to handle his self-consciousness while focussing on their needs. Descriptive characteristics cannot, in themselves, guide selection as they are so dependent on external influences which are beyond the control of the applicant. In a profession which seeks to bring about change within individuals and between individuals and their environment, the way in which the applicant has perceived and reacted to his own life circumstances is therefore a crucial area to consider when making admissions decisions.

the evaluative approach

The first task facing those who wish to determine whether success in social work education is related to certain attributes possessed by students is to decide which personal factors are likely to be associated with performance. Before this can be done it is necessary to understand the nature of professional education so that the demands it makes on the learner may be taken into consideration. Education has been defined by Tyler as

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8 Berengarten, pp.19-21.

> "a process for changing the behaviour of students in desired directions ..... When a student is educated he has acquired ideas, habits, attitudes, ways of thinking and professional skills which he did not have before he went to college; his behaviour has been changed."[9]

In his study of medical students Becker expressed the same idea in a different way when he described the intermediate product in professional education as the person who works to change himself so that the end product, a professional service to clients, may be given.[10]

Success in a programme of professional education requires some personal attributes which are different from, or additional to, those needed for success in an academic programme. A sustained and deep interest in the subject matter is needed for both, as also is sufficient intellectual capacity to be able to acquire knowledge related to the area of concern. In addition, if individuals, groups, and communities are to be helped with problems related to their social functioning, the social work student needs to be able to link theory and practice. To some degree this requires an ability to feel, and to some degree it requires the ability to grasp ideas, so that in the interaction of thinking and feeling behaviour may be changed and skills acquired. Towle described this quality as an integrative capacity, and succinctly summarized what she meant by saying that "compassionate attitudes must co-exist with dispassionate thinking".[11]

Studies have been carried out by Francel (1960), Schubert (1963 and 1964) and Olander (1964) to discover which personal attributes correlate most highly with success in social work education. Having defined the attributes which they considered likely to be associated with success, they prepared rating scales on which independent judges could measure the extent to which these were present in applicants. When two or more judges are in substantial agreement in their views on the extent to which a given attribute is present, and when that attribute is later found to be significantly associated with successful performance, the rating scales used for recording judgements may be regarded as valid instruments to use in the process of selection.

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9 Ralph W. Tyler, "Distinctive Attributes of Education for the Professions", Social Work Journal 33, (April, 1952), p.57.

10 Paraphrased from Howard J. Becker, et al., Boys in White (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), p.13.

11 Charlotte Towle, The Learner in Education for the Professions (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954), p.106.

A schedule of items based on the work of Francel, Schubert and Olander is now used in the selection process for several of the social work courses which are offered at the Middlesex Polytechnic.[12] It contains fifteen items, the last two of which are summarizing ones. The first thirteen items describe attributes which fall into three main categories. The first of these concerns the applicant's interest in social work and motivation for social work education. It could be adapted for any of the human relations professions:

1. Knowledge (theoretical)

The extent to which the applicant has informed himself about the field of social work. What background of knowledge has the applicant which shows that he pays more than lip-service to his interest in social work? Does he read newspapers, journals, and books which relate to current social issues? Even if he has very little experience of employment, what does he know which shows that he has an interest in people in relation to their social environment?

2. Knowledge (practical - from experience)

The extent to which the applicant has discovered, through making and using opportunities to work with people, that social work as a profession would be satisfying to him. Knowledge should have been tested by experience of working with people singly, in groups, or in organisations. Work experience and leisure time activities will provide evidence of the extent to which the applicant has gained satisfaction in working with people. Life and work experience will serve as a guide to the genuineness of the applicant's interest.

3. Professional Identification

The extent to which the applicant's values are in tune with the goals of the profession. The activities and experience in which the applicant has been involved will have led him to adopt certain attitudes about people and problems. To what extent are these in tune with those of social work? Is his choice of a profession solely a way of making a living, or is it chosen because his own values and those of the profession are complementary?

4. Plans for the Future

The extent to which the applicant has made tentative plans which demonstrate the seriousness of his intention to obtain social work education. The keen applicant is likely to have made a realistic plan for entering college. Practical arrangements about where to live, when to resign from present employment, and the general rearrangement of his life to attain the goal of social work education will have been thought through.

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12 M. Elizabeth Edwards, The Interview as an Instrument of Selection for Professional Education: (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms 1970).

The second group of attributes describe the applicant's capacity to benefit from social work education. This group could also be applied to any of the human relations professions:

5. Physical Health

The extent to which the applicant's physical condition enables him to meet the demands of social work education and to be purposefully concerned with the needs of others. If he has any condition which affects his physical functioning, in what ways does this modify his activities or limit his capacity to help others?

6. Psychological Health

The extent to which the applicant's psychological condition leaves him free to meet the demands of social work education and to be purposefully concerned with the needs of others. If there is at present, or has been in the past, a condition adversely affecting his psychological health, in what ways does this influence his present perception of reality and capacity to help others?

7. Intellectual Capacity

The extent to which the applicant has the basic endowment necessary for learning, thinking, and reasoning in social work education.

8. Practical Intelligence

The way in which the applicant applies himself to solving a problem is exemplified by the way in which he handles the task of applying for professional education. Does he show a capacity to organise himself, and to carry through his plans in an orderly manner?

The final group of attributes are more specific to social work performance:

9. Capacity for Relationship

The extent to which the applicant is able to communicate his interest in, and concern for, another person. It is important to assess the satisfaction he gains from human relationships; his ability to receive as well as to give help; and his understanding (however rudimentary) that being busy on behalf of another person is not the only, or necessarily the best way, to help him. How does the applicant relate to persons who are in authority over him, to those who are dependent on him, and to his peers?

10. Capacity for Change

The extent to which the applicant is open and flexible in his attitude towards learning, rather than closed and rigid. The degree to which the applicant will be able to develop professional skill is dependent on his capacity to consider and implement new ways of thinking and behaving.

11. Capacity to be Self-Critical

The extent to which the applicant can look at his own behaviour in order to analyse it. This attribute is necessary if he is to be able to learn a disciplined use of himself in a professional relationship.

12. Capacity to Accept Criticism

The extent to which the applicant welcomes or permits comment on his behaviour by another person with a view to his becoming aware of it in order, where necessary, to learn to modify it in a professional relationship.

13. Capacity to Function in Stress Situations

The extent to which the applicant can tolerate frustration and pressure, keeping a distant goal in mind rather than being overwhelmed by the present.

The last two items in the schedule were intended to provide the rater with an opportunity to give an overall impression of the applicant, and to invite him to make a definite decision about acceptance or rejection:

14. Overall Rating

The cumulative impression made by the applicant in relation to his suitability for professional social work education. You do not need to calculate the average ratings for items 1-13 in order to complete this entry, as its intention is to provide an opportunity to give your general impression of the applicant.

15. Recommendation

On the basis of the information available, and assuming that the final decision rested with you, indicate which of the following courses of action you would recommend concerning this applicant: -

Accept
Accept with reservations
Reject

In the studies which developed the approach of asking selection staff to make judgements on applicants, rating scales were used for each of the attributes which have been broadly defined. Several studies used five-point scales with anchoring definition at the midpoint and both extremes of each scale.

The question which arises in relation to studies of the attributes thought to be associated with success in social work education is: what has been learned which may be useful to future selectors? It was found earlier that the examination of objective characteristics had led to only one useful finding on which there was almost complete agreement, namely that previous academic performance is associated with outcome. Has the study of subjective characteristics brought to light any knowledge which may be helpful to those whose task it is to make admissions decisions?

That there is an association between ratings made on admissions materials and later performance has been firmly established in these studies, although precision in predicting the difference between marginal and failing students was not obtained. Thus, even though ratings do have meaning and are related to outcome, they do not necessarily succeed in drawing a sharp line of demarcation between success and failure. This undoubtedly is because there is no such clearly-defined boundary between the two, but rather a continuum along which performance may be graded from superior, down through average and marginal, to failure. French and Gordon, in an early study of applicants to schools and the variations between schools in admissions decisions, found that

> For the majority of the schools ....., the difference in decision on the same applicant seemed to come, not from conflicting ideas about the qualities required for effective practice, but rather from a more or less restricted interpretation of these qualities. With few exceptions, schools which accepted more applicants that were rejected by other schools did not appear to be looking for different qualities in their applicants but rather to be willing to accept applicants who appeared to deviate more widely from a loosely agreed upon ideal which apparently formed the common core of agreement among all schools.[13]

Although the purpose of these studies was to define selection criteria for social work education, the means which had to be devised before these ends could be achieved have considerable potential for future use. If schools were to adopt rating schedules as a method of comparing the evaluations of different faculty members concerning the written materials of applicants, this might serve as a useful starting-point for the process of making admissions decisions. Olander, in particular, has written of the way in which such a schedule might be used:

> A rating scale such as the one used in this study could serve as a tool in determining the need of a personal interview. Schools vary in their use of a personal interview as a part of the admissions process. In this school interviews are held selectively, after there has been an evaluation of completed written materials. The use of a scale to rate important factors, as one reviews the written materials helps identify the factor or factors for which there is insufficient evidence in the record to form a judgement. One can then decide whether a personal intereview would be a suitable way to obtain the needed evidence. If it is, then there is established a clear purpose on which to focus the interview.[14]

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13 David G. French and William E. Gordon, Applications for Admissions to Schools of Social Work, Fall Term, 1950, and Variation Among Schools in Admissions Decisions (New York: American Association of Schools of Social Work, 1952), p.6.

14 Olander, p.222.

To the more general question of what criteria should be used in selecting students for social work education, Francel provides an answer in summarizing the value of his study:

> The factors which were found to be significantly related to the criterion of success were personal attributes and potentialities. These factors include the potentiality to do graduate study as shown by the significance of undergraduate grade point averages. The other highly significant factors included capacity for change, emotional maturity, capacity to be self-critical and capacity to accept criticism of others. These are traits that are obviously related to the potential of a person for training. These traits, considered along with the ability to do successful academic work, would indicate an educable person.[15]

The knowledge provided by these studies could be useful to selectors in helping them to be more specific about the characteristics which they seek in applicants. Moreover, agreement on selection criteria would facilitate co-operation between different educational institutions on policies and practices relating to admissions. In addition, if a continuing effort were made to record and measure the attributes of applicants, validating these against later performance, the profession would benefit in two ways: firstly, knowledge concerning the attributes which are most significantly associated with successful outcome would be increased, and secondly those with responsibility for making admissions decisions could utilize this knowledge in their task of choosing, from the total number of applicants for social work education, those who are likely to make the best use of it.

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15 Francel, pp. 145-146.

Methods of Selection

Both in the United States and in Great Britain there is basic agreement on the needs and usefulness of the following instruments in selecting students for social work courses:

1. a detailed application form
2. a personal statement giving reasons for wishing to take up professional education for social work
3. tests of academic ability or confirmation of academic records (e.g. degree or General Certificate of Education at Advanced or Ordinary level)
4. two or more references.

interviews

The major discrepancy between North American and British practice is in the use made of selection interviews. In a survey which was conducted for the Council on Social Work Education in 1965 it was found that two-thirds of all accredited schools in North America used the 'pre-admission interview routinely, whereas in the remainder it was used selectively.[16] As late as 1967 it was stated that in Britain, "no professional course accepts candidates without interview"[17]; moreover, it was usual for each person who was interviewed to be seen by a field work teacher as well as by a faculty member representing the school. A survey carried out in 1970 showed that among accredited schools in the United States the routine use of interviewing had since 1965 lost ground in favour of selective use.[18] Of the schools which were firmly established, only one-third made routine use of interviews. Those schools which made most use of routine interviews tended to be new ones which were working towards accreditation.

routine use

The 38 schools at which interviews were used routinely, in that 50% or more of the students enrolled had been interviewed before being offered admission, were asked to indicate their reasons for adopting this practice. Seven possible reasons were given in detail and space was provided for the schools to write in three more.

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16 Admission to Graduate Schools of Social Work: Practices Problems and Prospects. Princeton, New Jersey: Educational Testing Service 1965, p.24.

17 Association of Social Work Teachers, Leicester, Information received in a letter written on January 25, 1967, by the Honorary Secretary.

18 M. Elizabeth Edwards "Selection Interviews in relation to the process of reaching Admissions Decisions in Schools of Social Work: report of a survey" Applied Social Studies 3, (1971), pp.39-50.

The seven reasons are given below in descending order of frequency in which they were rated by schools:

1. There is a special need to test the applicant's capacity for personal relationships before he enters professional education for social work.
2. To give the applicant an opportunity to ask questions and to decide if this is the right school for him.
3. To form our own assessment of the applicant's academic ability, as his undergraduate transcript reveals an uneven or borderline level or performance.
4. To give the applicant who is later admitted a sense of having started an educational process.
5. To discuss administrative matters, such as field placement and financial planning.
6. The need to attract to this school outstanding applicants who are likely to be accepted by several schools.
7. The school wishes to enrol more students, and therefore uses the interview partly for recruitment purposes.

The first two reasons were rated as equal, and the last two were regarded by schools as of negligible importance.

selective use

The 47 schools which used interviews selectively were asked to give the reasons which had led to this choice of policy. Four possible reasons were written into the questionnaire and the schools rated them in the following order of importance

1. Rising numbers of applicants and the consequent administrative costs concerned with admissions.
2. Rising number of applicants and the consequent unavailability of faculty in adequate numbers to conduct interviews.
3. Studies which have shown that interviews tend to corroborate decisions based on written materials.
4. Studies which have shown that interviews introduce the personal bias of the interviewer and may result in decisions which are less fair to applicants than those based on written materials.

Additional reasons given by the schools for the use of selective interviews fell into two groups, the first concerned with administrative reasons and the second with the cost of travel for candidates attending interviews.

The administrative reasons given for selective interviewing did not in themselves imply a criticism of the interview as an instrument of selection. However, the larger group of reasons given for selective interviewing (representing 15 schools) raised questions about the value of the interview. Five schools referred to the lack of evidence to support the usefulness of interviews, and cited studies which showed that they did not reduce the uncertainty with which performance in graduate school was predicted. Three schools explained their infrequent use of interviews by quoting their own experience in predicting student potential with a high level of accuracy from written materials. A further four schools regarded the interview as pointless unless it had a purpose which could be attained in no other way, such as assessing an applicant whose personal suitability for social work appeared doubtful, or discussing with an applicant matters which would help him in reaching a decision about entering the profession. A few schools, which had made detailed studies of their own admissions decisions, had found that the interview served only to corroborate the decisions that had already been made on the basis of written documents.

It is apparent that the grounds on which a school decides whether or not to use interviews routinely differ. Schools which use the interview routinely do so for reasons which they consider helpful to them, to applicants, and to both simultaneously. The reason most frequently given by such schools for using interviews is that they provide an opportunity for the applicant to ask questions and to decide if this is the right school for him. In addition several schools regard the interview as the beginning of an educational process which continues after admission. The other group of reasons given by schools which use the interview routinely refer mostly to the need to assess the applicant's personal suitability for a course in social work education.

In contrast with these reasons for routine use of interviews, the only ones given by selective users are those which are considered helpful to the school. Even the discarding of interviews for reasons of cost is done to attract promising applicants. Administrative pressures, such as the difficulty of making arrangements to interview an increasing number of applicants, have led some to undertake research studies into the effect of interviews on admissions decisions. Their results have been consonant with the findings of similar enquiries in other professions. As yet, there is no evidence to show that interviews add to the accuracy with which successful performance in social work education can be predicted.

These two approaches to the use of the interview demonstrate different attitudes taken by schools of social work to the task of selection. However favourably impressed they may be with the written materials of applicants, schools which use interviews routinely consider that a personal evaluation by their own representative adds information which should be taken into account before a final decision is made to offer admission. Selective users, on the other hand, accept that decisions can usually be made on the written materials of applicants, and only for special reasons needs a decision be delayed until an interview has been held. Since the research evidence supports this view, and since the pressures of rising numbers of applicants continue to increase, it is easy to understand the trend away from routine towards selective use of interviews.

Discussion Arising

interpretation of success

Dr. Edwards was asked to confirm whether success in social work education meant success on the course, and whether the same people who had carried out the selection judged whether a student had been successful at the end of the course. She affirmed that this was the interpretation of success in social work education. There would probably be some staff judging success on the course who had been involved in selection but because of the large number of selectors involved in a reasonably sized course and the turnover of staff, the people who decided whether a student had succeeded were unlikely to be those who had selected him. They would, however, be of the same type.

practice

The next topic to be discussed was the low correlation between success in social work education and performance on the job. Much concern was expressed about this, although it was agreed that it was common to many professions. It was felt that more research was needed into the criteria which make a successful practitioner.

women and young students

A member then cited a small research study which she had carried out in the UK in 1968-70 which confirmed the findings of the US study quoted by Dr. Edwards. She had found that women had been more successful as social work students both academically and in the field. She also found that younger students did better on the two year course than mature students, while mature students coped better with the one year course than the younger students.

selection

A general discussion on selection then took place. Among the difficulties cited was the problem of giving equal treatment to all candidates. For example, after a difficult interview lasting perhaps an hour, selectors often gave the candidate who followed a much shorter interview, which would tend to be less of a strain. In such circumstances how could objective judgements be made?

Selection of Students

Questions for Syndicates

Dr. Edwards supplied members with a number of questions relating to student selection for discussion in syndicates.

1. Should applicants for social work courses be screened in or screened out? Should applications be dealt with as they are received, with places offered to all who would seem likely to reach the level of performance required by the programme, or should applications be dealt with only after a closing date has been reached, when each course can try to select the most promising applicants from the available pool?

2. On what criteria are admissions decisions made?
   On what criteria should they be made?

3. To what extent do the criteria of selection for different kinds of professional social work courses differ? To what extent should they differ?

4. What methods of selection are used in order to evaluate applicants and reach admissions decisions?
   To what extent are these different methods effective?

5. What are the purposes of using interviews as one of the tools of selection? Do interviews succeed in meeting these purposes?

6. Should selection for a given social work course be undertaken by as many staff and field work teachers as wish to be involved, or should the number of persons responsible for selection be limited? What are the advantages of each alternative, and which would you select if you were given the choice?

7. Should applicants be offered places on professional social work courses without being interviewed?

Miss J Snelling,
Head of Applied Social Studies,
North London Polytechnic.

THE MANAGEMENT OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

"A number of people involved in social work education today feel that we are in a crisis of curriculum development. This is probably a normal occurrence in any developmental situation, but, like any crisis, it gives rise to a certain amount of discomfort. In my paper I shall first spend some time in considering the nature of this crisis and then discuss the objectives of the basic qualifying course in social work. I shall then move to the suggestion that the future of social work education probably lies in the development of a core or body of studies with related elective choices, and consider how ways can be found to relate electives to the basic core. Finally, I shall discuss how we might search for studies which should be included in the basic core element.

crisis

The crisis in which many of us find ourselves results from a range of different factors, influences and events. Many people running social work courses feel an urgent need to reshape or redirect their courses. We have extremely crowded courses in terms of curriculum content. We are not receiving clear enough messages from the field of social work as to the nature and level of the tasks for which we are trying to train people, yet at the same time we are criticised for not managing that aspect better. We have many problems in developing practical work - of course there always have been difficulties here, but the facts that training has advanced into different fields and there is a rapid turnover of workers in the field have aggravated the situation and made it even more difficult for social work teachers to establish contacts with social workers.

Further difficulties arise from the development of larger courses in social work, as many staff are experienced only in running small courses, and methods which succeed on these do not necessarily transfer well to a larger scale. A related problem is that we often find it difficult to cope with the tendency to remoteness which can arise from in large courses; remoteness not only between staff and students but also between college staff and practical work teachers. The demand from the students to modernise and liberalise our courses, to take account of their views on how courses should develop is another pressure we have to face. Again, many social work teachers are struggling with new forms of assessment and those who are not are likely to be fighting criticism that they should be.

Many social work staff are having to cope with mergers of courses, largely resulting from changes in types of practice, and these are never easy to deal with because they involve so many political aspects, for example small courses merging with larger ones fear a loss of identity and feel that they have to put up a fight for preservation, or, at least, be seen to be doing so. Furthermore, we are faced with massive resource cuts at a time of expansion, a time when we need more resources than usual.

continuum

Thus our state of 'normal' crisis has many components, of which most are not particularly new. I think, however, that there is also one major feature in the current change which has not been present before - the fact that a continuum of social work education seems to be almost within reach. In the past the qualifying course for social work had to take the whole burden of the hopes that social work had for education and from education. Now, for the first time, it is likely that other levels of course, further and advanced levels, will develop. While this is, of course, welcome, it is, nevertheless, quite difficult to run qualifying courses as part of a continuum, when the rest of the continuum is, as it were, still on order. I feel sure that unless we work hard to achieve this continuum it will remain on order and never materialise. Therefore we have not simply an interest but an urgent need in self-defence to work to promote the continuum of social work education.

CQSW objectives

The imminent introduction of different levels of social work education makes it easier to consider the curriculum objectives of the basic qualifying course than it was previously. Hitherto so much had to be squeezed into the qualifying course in order to prepare a student for any task he might be required to do as a social worker that it was virtually impossible to consider curriculum objectives rationally.

I have perhaps rather arbitrarily chosen to speak about curriculum objectives in relation to the two year qualifying course in social work. By doing so I omit the one year postgraduate course, the four year degree course and other social work courses which do not fit into the two year qualifying course mould. I also ignore to some extent the present one year qualifying course in residential work, although much of what I say will be relevant to this course. I have limited my area of consideration in this way because unless I deal with something specific, my comments will be too general to be of much value. However, I hope that some of the issues I raise concerning the management of curriculum development will be of general interest. In speaking of the two year qualifying course, I shall deal with both the graduate and non-graduate courses, although I know there are differences relating to the general educational level of the students.

If we relate the two year qualifying course to the continuum of social work courses which will develop I think it is possible to describe its overall objective as the provision of a basic vocational training for the social worker. Therefore it should provide a beginner's appreciation of the whole field of social work together with some depth of understanding, skill and capacity to function in one part of that field. If these objectives are accepted as reasonable

we must discard some of the objectives which grew up when expectations were so many and so diverse I would expect that on the basic qualifying courses we should not:

1. Expect our students to learn how to become every kind of social worker, and by the same token, expect our courses to teach everything in the field of social work. It is possible to accept that courses have a certain amount of shared ground, but that some offer opportunities in one area, and others in other parts of the social work spectrum.

2. Attempt to train research workers, although we should, of course, train students to use the results of research.

3. Attempt to train managers or organisers on a large or sophisticated scale.

4. Attempt to train specialists - specialisms should be developed at a later stage of knowledge and practice.

5. Promote 'education' as a separate entity from 'training', through the use of such additional studies as 'liberal studies'. Any education which we offer should be taught through normal course content and not as an extra subject.

6. Attempt to train consultants - this too should be done at a later stage.

7. Hope to encourage attitude change to any great extent. Although we can certainly hope for some attitude change, it is bound to be limited in a period of only two years, and will probably be concerned with the student coming to a better understanding of himself.

8. Expect to teach logical thinking. We can hope to assist our students to think logically but I suspect that if they are not capable of logical thought when they begin the course, they will not be able to develop this in two years.

9. Promote completely interdisciplinary learning with other "caring" professions. Although students should have opportunities for interdisciplinary contact and thinking during their course, the basic education and training which they are given on the qualifying course cannot be largely interdisciplinary - only at a later stage can interdisciplinary opportunities be fully exploited.

Assuming that it is not possible to train students on a basic qualifying course for all forms of practice in social work, that there must be some selection in terms of knowledge, understanding and skill, what should be contained in the core of studies shared by all students and what should be allocated to the elective studies which lead to a particular, fairly broad area of practice? In connection with my work at North London Polytechnic and as a member of the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work I am much occupied with the investigation of this issue: what is meant by a core; how a core can be constructed; what elective studies should comprise; how elective studies can be related to core studies? In trying to arrive at a viewpoint on the Council we have been influenced by the work of Ann Vickery Olive Stevenson, Ruth Beard, Reg Wright, David Jones, certain papers written for the CCETSW and unpublished domestic papers from the Polytechnic of North London.

If our objective is to train social workers who will be able to function imaginitively as beginners in one part of the social work field, then I believe that the best way to tackle the question of curriculum objectives is to begin, as it were, at the end, and work backwards. Therefore I would start by considering how the core studies and elective studies would relate to each other and how they can be organised. I assume that core studies would comprise some social studies, some social work studies and some practical work. I also assume that an elective would comprise social studies, social work studies and a major piece of practical study.

Taking the social work element of the core studies, it is possible to make a check list of the components underlying it. They fall into four main areas:

1. Clients

   Families; children; people alone; the old.
   People with physical/mental disabilities or illness.
   Deviant/delinquent people.
   Groups of those above living in residential centres.
   Groups of those above attending day centres, clubs, etc.
   Small local communities in declining/developing environments.

2. Social situations or problems

   Poverty, income maintenance, employment and housing.
   Personal relationships; parents/children, marital, isolation.
   Social opportunities, education, leisure.
   Encountering institutions, e.g. courts, prisons hospitals, schools, homes/hostels.

3. Organisations and settings for social assistance

L.A. social service departments.
Private/non-statutory organisations, including settlements.
Residential and day centres.
Courts, prisons/alternatives/after care systems.
Health service (health centres, hospitals, clinics)
Schools.
Consumer organisations.

4. Social work interventions

Values; roles; tasks.
Means and levels of intervention:
1. resource mobilisation (including services, ancilliaries, volunteers, etc.)
2-6. casework, group work, residential work, day care, community work.

However, it would be difficult to organise these components into a manageable programme which has any meaning, for one cannot teach checklists. After considering the matter for some time I concluded that the main difficulty arose from not having a clear enough model of possible electives, so I devised a list of probable essentials of electives and questions which have to be decided regarding them:

1. Complex structure, drawing from the 4 component areas of social work core and from social studies core, and directly related to practical work.
2. Should be oriented more to people (clients) than to a service, or a method or task.
3. Should be able to change and grow, must not be narrow or rigid.
4. Must make sense to social workers and employers, and to recruits.
5. Should be a few large broad electives with sub-electives, rather than numerous parallel electives? More flexible that way?
6. Relative size of elective to social studies/social work core must be smaller. Relative size of elective to social work part of core is equal or smaller but not larger.
7. Elective must deepen (broaden?) selected but essential parts of core learning, both academically and in practical work. Here the student applies his learning. Elective is essential to integration of course work.
8. Is the elective a field of application then? e.g. social work with individuals and families; social work with users of residential or day care centres; social work with (local) communities?

9. If so, the student could not work across the whole of his chosen field but could be expected to learn and experience a reasonable range within it, including a range of clients (for want of a better word), of methods of intervention, of problem/situations, and of setting/organisation.

10. How early in the course should such an elective orientation colour the student's learning?

11. What alternative elective models should be examined?

Turning now to the core studies themselves, particularly those relating to social studies, we have to decide whether we should teach them subjects when there are so many separate areas to be covered. Ruth Beard points out that the concept of bodies of knowledge which students master seems to be out of date as their content becomes outmoded so rapidly. She suggests that students today therefore need more to be helped to develop skill in relating to new ideas, new information, understanding their application and expecting them not to last forever. She suggests that students need to be explorers because they are dealing with new knowledge, communicators because they have to be able to pass on their knowledge; and team workers, for they will encounter shared work and learning throughout their careers. Miss Beard stresses that these skills are particularly important to the average or less able student. While the context in which she spoke was of science students, I believe that her comments are equally relevant to social work students.

How, though, can these ideas be put into practice? Olive Stevenson, in 1971, spoke of the knowledge required for social work and she too said that it seemed no longer appropriate to provide students with solid slabs of subjects. She suggested that we should be seeking 'frames of reference' that were appropriate to the student and help them use these frames of reference. She stressed that the existence of a frame limits and concentrates the material within it.

The concept of frames of reference led me to the idea of teaching around topics running through a course rather than subject areas. While I have in the past been somewhat dubious about this approach, suspecting that it would cause students to emerge from the course with confused and superficial ideas drawn from many sources and based on theories of which they have no understanding, I feel that it is essential to explore ways to remedy our overcrowded syllabus. R. Wright has produced for the CCETSW a list of topics selected from courses run over recent years and suggests that they or similar topics might be used as strands to hold a course together:

(a) Objectives of intervention, roles, relationships and social problem situations.

(b) Poverty, deprivation and loss (economic, social and personal).

(c) Authority, independence and dependence.

(d) Change and conservation; conflict and consensus.

(e) Identity, projection and introjection.

(f) Normality, health, maturity, norms and deviancy.

(g) Aggression, love and hate, guilt and separation.

(h) Groups, communities and mutual aid processes.

It seems to me that these strands can be unravelled, in collaboration with the teachers of the foundation disciplines, mainly social science, but also others, for example, philosophy, medicine and psychology. At the foundation point might be found the frame of reference. Therefore, I have constructed a list of possible or sample frames of reference for the curriculum of social work courses:

1. Psychology

   Socialisation in childhood (psycho-analytic; behaviourist/learning; cognitive/Piaget).
   Socialisation after childhood. (Symbolic interaction/roles in adult life).
   Small group theory.

2. Sociology

   Socialisation
   Role
   Control and deviance
   Consensus and conflict; social stratification and power.
   Organisation
   (Sociology of social work?)

3. Social policy and administration; Law

   Law and society (social control, citizen protection, channel of aid, settlement of disputes).
   Economic underpinning, structure and processes of the welfare state.
   Nature of the welfare state.
   Making and changing of law and policy.

4. Medicine

   Significance of psychiatric illness and mental retardation for personal and family life.
   Significance of physical illnesses and disabilities for personal and family life.
   Medical models of diagnosis and treatment, prevention, idea of a comprehensive health service.

Finally, I would stress that until the nature of the elective studies in a course is certain, it is not possible to see the correct orientation for either the frames of reference or the themes and topics in teaching terms for the core studies.

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Papers in preparation

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CCETSW Discussion paper on teaching legal studies.

CCETSW Discussion paper on teaching community work.

CCETSW Discussion paper on teaching value basis of social work.

Various unpublished CCETSW and PNL papers.

Discussion Arising

training Should staff training for social work teachers be undertaken entirely in conjunction with training for staff of other departments, or were there certain techniques to learn which were relevant to them alone?

Mr. McAllister replied that there might be some matters which were not of interest to staff in other departments, but for the most part it would be best to mix staff of different disciplines in training programmes as different types of staff had so much to benefit from each other.

social workers as teachers Was there not a basic dilemma in that social work educators regarded themselves as social workers rather than as teachers? Mr. McAllister was inclined to agree. In his experience social workers seemed to find the transition to becoming a teacher more difficult than staff in other departments. Perhaps the reason was that the two jobs had so much in common.

curriculum How was it possible to draw up a social work curriculum before deciding on the function of a social worker?

Mr. McAllister stressed that it was important for social work educators to realise that this was a problem common to many of the professions. The only way social work teachers could find out what social workers needed in their training was to go into the field and observe their activities. Miss Snelling added that it was particularly difficult in the present state of change in social work to discover what type of training was needed. Moreover, as in other areas of work, by the time some decisions were made about curriculum content and these had been put into practice the training needs of social workers would already have changed again.

planning teams In allocating staff to curriculum planning teams, should timetable allowance be given? Mr. McAllister thought this was possible, though not necessarily essential. Miss Snelling commented that it was fairly easy to give timetable relief for course planning if an entirely new course were being planned but often course planning was a question of amalgamating existing courses and then it became difficult to give relief from teaching as there were existing students to be taught and probably no additional staff.

M J McAllister,
Head of School
of Social Work,
Nursing & Education,
Ipswich Civic College.

THE MANAGEMENT OF A SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT

"I have no intention of giving any instructions as to how a social work department ought to be run, but I will willingly share some thoughts and exchange some ideas about the problems involved in such a task.

Let us begin by considering the implications of the title of my paper: it concerns management, social work and the department.

Perhaps it would be worthwhile to consider what a department actually is. Due to the differing backgrounds of the members of the conference, the term 'department' probably has a different meaning for each of them. Moreover, the concept of the department is changing. The Weaver Report the Polytechnic White Paper and Circular 7/70 have had implications for the management of departments outside the university sector. Different sectors of education - the universities the polytechnics, and other institutions of higher and further education have different departmental models.

There is an unstated assumption in those colleges which are developing along the lines indicated by Circular 7/70 and preceding documents that the management of the FE institution is moving towards an academic freedom akin to that of the universities. This has implications for departmental structures and departmental management. Perhaps I could make two assertions about this model. Firstly, in the university the academic community has tended to become less self-governing rather than more so, as the universities have developed. In Oxford and Cambridge, where there is a federal system of colleges, the policy and administration is entirely in the hands of academics. As other types of university have developed - the collegiate universities of, say, London and Wales, the redbricks, the former CATs and the newest universities, the situation has become rather different. In most new universities the ultimate governing body which is responsible for property and finance is the Council, which tends to be dominated by laymen. This seems to me to be a movement away from academic freedom.

My second assertion is that associated with this trend is a similar one in the internal government of the universities. If a comparison is made between the old and the new universities it is not possible to discern a trend towards academic democracy. In most of the redbrick universities the chief academic body is the senate which consists mainly of professors. In the new universities where some younger staff sit on the Senate they number less than 30%.

Therefore I would suggest that the university model shows a move not to academic democracy but to professorial oligarchy. Those of us working in institutions which seem to be moving towards a university model should be aware of this fact. It is interesting to note that some polytechnics are experimenting with matrix structures in an attempt to move right away from departmental structures. Although they are too recent to evaluate, they are interesting in that they are conscious of the implications of moving towards the university models.

To sum up, I am suggesting that there is a continuum of different meanings for 'the department', associated with correspondingly different degrees of academic freedom. Similarly, within the FE colleges themselves, the concept of a department depends on the particular establishment in which it exists.

social work

The perception of social work, like the perception of the department, is not constant. There is a range of courses, all different, with which social work education is concerned.

management

The function of management is influenced by the type of department in which it operates and that in turn is influenced by the type of institution in which the department is found. Therefore it is not really possible to speak of the 'management of the social work department' - it is necessary, in a sense, to particularise. But in another sense it is important to generalise because in considering the management of a social work department one must also consider the management of any department so that comparisons may be drawn and the differences between the management of a social work department and any other type of department may be identified. I suspect that if the differences between different types of department and the same type of department within different institutions are examined, the greatest differences will be those found between different institutions.

Therefore, a starting point for a study of the management of social work departments is a consideration of the management of departments in general. An obvious implication of this is that all of us who are concerned with management of social work departments - not only the head of the department but principal and senior lecturers as well - should study the management of departments in general. A large percentage of this study will probably be applicable to the social work department.

While it is not possible in this paper to analyse in any detail the functions of managers in any type of department, I would draw attention to some aspects which seem to me to be of particular importance:

identification of needs

It is important to identify needs, not simply within the department itself but in the community in which the college is situated. Then these needs should be considered and some attempt made to fulfil them in terms of the community, the education service and the requirements of external bodies such as the

CCETSW. We have a responsibility to concern ourselves not only with the provision of courses which are accepted for the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work but with other courses as required by the community.

Difficulties arise because we have to cope with conflicting messages. For example, the predicted number of social workers required as forecast by the CCETSW and the DHSS differ by about 15%. In determining future needs it is necessary to sort out these apparently conflicting demands.

It is necessary, too, that managers cope with needs within the department. This mean that an important function of management is to consider staff training and development. Departmental managers also have a responsibility to the institution as a whole, and should therefore consider how they can meet its needs.

staff development

I strongly disagree with the idea, expressed elsewhere in this conference, that we should make special provision for the training of social work teachers. The role of the social work teacher is as much concerned with education as with training, and if his prime task is to teach it is the responsibility of the manager of his department to provide an appropriate staff training and development programme.

It would be wrong to develop such a programme within the department. The starting point for any staff training and development should be within the institution as a whole. It should be the responsibility of the managers of a social work department to see that the institution possessed as adequate staff training and development programme. This applies to the universities as much as to any other type of institution.

The first requirement is obviously a basic course in education. This should be given a higher priority than any specialised training for social work education. Unfortunately, with the education service facing stringent cuts in finance, one of the first aspects which are likely to be affected is staff training and development.

resources

Therefore one of the most important tasks for the manager of the social work department at present is to fight for the funds necessary to maintain and develop a staff training and development programme, which will enable staff to cope with the imminent expansion of social work education. We have to prove to our paymasters by cogent argument that we can only survive as efficient educators if we have enough resources for staff development and training. Thus one of the most important tasks of the manager of the social work department is to ensure that necessary resources are forthcoming."

B E Loader,
Adviser, Social
Services Department,
Leicestershire.

CURRENT ISSUES AND DEVELOPMENTS IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

"I have chosen in this paper to make no precise distinction between 'issues' and 'developments' but to use these words to mean an inclusive group of 'happenings'. By 'social work practice' I refer to the environment into which the social work student will be catapulted on completing his course. The particular issues and developments on which I shall concentrate are those which I believe to be of particular relevance to course design and student selection.

I recognise that from my point of view as an Adviser to a Social Services Department I may not refer to issues and developments from the normal vantage point of a social worker, but nevertheless, the resolution and application of these issues can only be through the social workers themselves. I am further aware that what the social services agencies desire in terms of attitudes and skills for social workers can be only one of the determinants of course content. Other factors, the colleges' viewpoint, the ideas of the students themselves, and other influences will bear heavily on the development of social work education. Even if it is thought that the colleges themselves should be the main deciders of curriculum policy, it would seem appropriate for the agencies to comment on how well prepared students leaving qualifying courses are for work in an agency setting. I do not wish to imply a need for conformity but only to suggest that students should be prepared adequately in their courses for them to be able to relate to the agency in such a way that optimum service is obtained for the client within the constraints inevitable in any organisation which lacks boundless resources.

A major problem is that even if it is possible to define educational needs, a 'who does what' conflict remains. Perhaps social work educators believe that a good deal of the preparation for a career in social work has to take place in the setting of a social services agency itself, and cannot be taught on a college course, which, for various reasons, tends to be of a less specialised nature than that required by the agency. While, therefore, there would be obvious advantages in students joining social services departments which provide for induction training, such provision rarely exists. Apart from personal supervision, orientation courses and further development opportunities are not generally offered in a consistent way to help young social workers adapt to their jobs. Therefore, it is vital that they are prepared as effectively as possible for the work they will do before they join the agency staff.

One of the first factors which will confront the new social worker is the sheer pressure of the work. To demonstrate this I have obtained statistics for one Area of a Social Services Department covering a three month period from October 1st to December 31st 1973. This district serves an urban population of 60,000 - 70,000 in the City of Leicester. During that period 447 referrals were received of which 32 were regarded as inappropriate. 65% of the referrals were allocated for immediate work, 26% were not allocated for attention and 9% were not accepted. 145 cases allocated to be dealt with by social workers included 7 applications for short stay residential accommodation; 27 assessments for residential accommodation (mainly the elderly); 22 sociological reports for geriatric services; 30 child care cases; 7 adoption enquiries; 20 miscellaneous family problems and financial difficulties; 5 requests for day care of the elderly; 5 evictions, 4 accommodation problems; and 18 mental health cases. Another group of 147 cases were dealt with by social work assistants; 22 chiropody requests; 62 cases of general welfare of the elderly; 50 mobile meals enquiries; 7 domiciliary visits; 3 Christmas parcels enquiries; 3 referrals to the occupational therapist.

Pressure of work has various ramifications for the student. How well prepared is he to cope with the volume of work which he will face? The attitudes a student may develop at college may be at variance with the need he will have to accept personal limitations and limitations of time. He will have to decide not 'what more can be done to help this client' but 'what is it merely essential to do for this client'. He has to have the ability to make decisions, both to take responsibility and share responsibility, to cope with the anxiety of deciding not to help a client, of deciding that no more can realistically be done and therefore to close a case. These decisions can be a great burden and there is a need for the young social worker to be prepared for them during his training. It is important that the social worker is helped to recognise the possibility that he will only have a strictly limited stay with a particular social work agency, and that this has implications for the programmes of work he embarks on with individual clients. Clearly a limited stay means that he can really only set limited goals for himself. One may question his freedom to make autonomous decisions which others who succeed him would have to put into effect. One is often aware of the way cases change direction with a change of worker. I suggest that he must therefore learn to reconcile his expectations of personal autonomy with the role of the agency as a whole to make decisions which encompass a greater time span than that of the individual worker. The new entrant should also be trained in the ability to size up situations and decide what type of help is needed. While he might not be making such decisions immediately he joins the agency, the concept of an Intake Team which allocates selected cases to other teams of workers (often called Long Term Teams) is gaining popularity and it is quite conceivable that at some point he will be invited to take part in this process. The emergence of the 'helping group' is another development with which the social worker must be able to cope. As there is too great a volume of work for the individual social worker to do himself, he must be able to work with and through other people; social work assistants, home help organisers, family aids, occupational therapists, volunteers, etc. The social worker must therefore be able to make decisions over which cases

demand his own attention and which he can delegate to others. This demands of him not only a knowledge of what other people can do, but a respect for other workers' professionalism and particular expertise.

Unless the social worker is working in a hospital social work unit or a clinic he will have to cope with the difficulties of belonging to a very large organisation. For instance he may have to work very hard at formulating his case for a given client as the needs of his client have to be balanced against those of a wide range of people. Also related to the size of the organisations is the fact that he will probably face a devolution of management responsibility, which, of course, he may welcome, as it means he may be able to play some part in collective decision making. It follows that he will benefit from understanding of the way a large organisation works, so that he can operate effectively within it.

Social workers, certainly those in urban areas, have to be aware that it is not just individuals who cry out for help but whole communities. Therefore they have to find ways of working with and helping the community at large. Although some social workers are trained specifically for community work, more should be done to give all social workers a community work appreciation. At present they are often unclear about the aims and methods of community work, and this may lead to a general state of confusion, a lack of support for the community worker by other social workers and even conflict about aims and methods of work in relation to individual families. A related situation is that of the community based social worker who helps individuals and families on a day to day basis and thus seeks to prevent major crises in their lives. Such a social worker has a different style of work to one who is traditionally Area based as he is not dealing with cases which follow predictable stages of development. Social work courses should therefore prepare students for work as both community based and area based social workers and help them to recognise the different styles of work.

Another area which the student will face on entry to the profession is the range of possibilities that will be brought about by National Health Service re-organisation. Built into the new system, in a formal sense, are opportunities for consultation and collaboration between N.H.S. staff and social workers. Social Worker liaison with G.P.'s and attachment to group practices are a growth area. Traditionally, social workers have had fixed views about the base from which medical and nursing personnel operate and the standards and attitudes with which they approach clients and indeed there may well be essential differences between the approaches of two types of worker. However it is inappropriate to conceive of the N.H.S. as solely an 'ill health service' and to the extent that it caters for the general health and welfare of the community, its basic aim is close to that of the social work services. Therefore it would be worthwhile to examine likely student reactions to these possibilities and ensure that they are prepared for the possibilities of collaboration.

A rather more specific development is the possibility of changes in the way social work with children and young people is undertaken, particularly that coming under the label of Intermediate Treatment. The social worker is now

being asked to take an overall view of the young persons requirements for a rounded development of his personality and skills. He has to decide what the client needs in terms of experiences and influences which may be brought to bear in terms of individual relationships, group experiences and opportunities to develop skills, as well as problem solving through casework and group work help.

New social workers must also be prepared for the importance which is now attached to day care, as opposed to residential care. Its growing popularity can, it is true, be partially attributed to the high cost of residential accommodation, and its propensity to become blocked by long stay, even terminal cases. However, it is the positive benefit of day care which is seen as most important through its contribution to the growth, development and rehabilitation of many groups: the mentally handicapped, the physically handicapped, children and so on. To achieve this, a transformation is taking place from a purely care taking role to one of attention to individual needs, involvement in activity, stimulation and encouraging achievement.

A fundamental issue is whether social work training should prepare students for generic or specialist roles. Often the criticism is made that the student is not adequately prepared for a generic role, and one of the reasons for this, of course, is that the two years of a basic qualifying course is too short a period for him to learn all he needs to know in terms of basics. However, while it might not be possible for him to cope effectively, with the whole range of tasks presented by a mixed case load, I think it would be reasonable for colleges to help develop a generic mode of thinking so that, for instance, if he were dealing with a family where there are problems of juvenile delinquency he would be able to recognise factors not directly connected with the youngster concerned which might be contributing to family stress, such as the presence of an ageing relative in the home.

Paradoxically, there is also a problem connected with disappearing specialisms. The social services agencies are at present dependent mainly on older social workers for work with the elderly and handicapped. Young entrants tend to be more interested in other specialisms and it is possible that once the older workers retire, there will be no one adequately equipped to take on their work. However, an improved structure of courses of further study which follow the basic qualifying training might ensure that work in these potentially neglected areas could be developed among the new generation of social workers.

In conclusion I should like to summarise the expectations which the social services agencies have of their new staff, these include:-

1. Quick adjustment to the pace and range of work of the agency.
2. Effective case load management, i.e. decision making and, in particular, the ability to handle closure work.

3. Acceptance of personal limitations and the limitations which exist within cases themselves - the fact that it is not possible to achieve certain goals with certain clients.

4. The ability to deal effectively with crisis situations both in terms of decisive action and capitalising on them when they arise.

5. Effectiveness in acquiring resources for their clients and in communicating upwards so that management is kept aware of the personal nature of the service.

6. Reconciliation to the public accountability aspect of the Social Services.

7. Recognition of the growing influence of voluntary bodies.

8. The ability to see issues in a broad context - this assists the worker to avoid a purely emotional reaction if he fails to get resources for his particular clients and enables him to arrive at compromises without sacrificing his integrity.

9. Reconciliation of widely differing demands made on him.

10. Appreciation of the work of other people connected with the social services.

11. Acceptance of the limitations of client self-determination and the acceptance by him of his authority.

12 Orientation towards the widest use of community resources.

13. Recognition of his own managerial role, i.e. controlling resources including self, as well as the therapist role. "

Discussion Arising

loyalty The first question to be raised concerned the loyalty of the social worker. Should his role be to help the client understand why resources are not available, or to fight with the client for resources? Mr. Loader's opinion was that it was unethical for anyone to fight from the outside against the organisation which employed him. A member suggested that the situation would perhaps not arise if the social worker at grass roots level were more involved in the planning of resource allocation. Mr. Loader felt that while this was true, experience in Leicester with decision making being delegated further down the system had shown that it was still important that in the end the decision maker should be someone in a position to take an overall view of the situation.

course style Referring to Mr. Loader's review of the issues and developments students should be prepared for when joining a social work team, a member suggested that the bulk of them were concerned with attitudes, expectations and self-realisation. Did he therefore take the view that the style in which a course was conducted

was of more importance than its curriculum content. Mr. Loader agreed that style was very important and added that as only a certain amount of curriculum content could be squeezed into a course, experimenting with different teaching methods in order to see if additional learning could take place, would be valuable.

residential work experience

Would it be of benefit for the field social worker to know something of residential social work? Mr. Loader thought it would. He suggested that, perhaps, field social work students could be attached to residential units as 'social workers', rather than as temporary residential workers when on placement. In this way they might come to understand the needs and problems of the residential worker better through working together over a longer period.

special interests

Discussion then turned to the sense of frustration experienced by many new agency personnel who while at college had developed an interest in a particular area of work, but were unable to specialise in this except in their own time. No ready solutions were available, however, whilst there remained an acute shortage of staff in relation to the volume of work.

closing cases

The final points made concerned the fear social workers had of closing cases and the consequent effect - an unmanageable case load. A member commented that often, in fact, occasional help was of more value to a client than taking him on as a long term case, and Mr. Loader agreed, adding that it was a fallacy to think that no client was able to cope with having more than one social worker helping him, on successive occasions.

For the final session of the conference, two speakers, Miss J. Snelling and Mr. B.E. Loader were joined by Miss J.R. Guy, Assistant Director of the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work to form the panel for an open forum. The speakers were asked to comment on a range of issues and difficulties facing social workers and social work educators. During the first part of the session, the panel discussed questions raised by the syndicates, and then the discussion was thrown open for more general debate.

home helps

The first issue to be discussed was home helps. This group of employees was probably the largest in numerical terms in the Social Services Department, and doing the bulk of the social welfare and caring for the elderly and handicapped. Yet home helps were exploited, undervalued and undertrained as Social Welfare Assistants. Could the experience and empathy of these people towards the elderly and handicapped not be harnessed in order for them to become Social Workers, who, unlike many at present, would want to work with the elderly and handicapped?

The speakers were of the opinion that more could indeed be done to upgrade the conditions and recognise the value of the home help, although not all agreed that making them into social workers was the best solution. Mr. Loader said that more could be done for home helps both in terms of salary and training. In his own authority some training was given and senior home helps had been trained in how to cope with problematic situations, but this should be extended. However, although some might make good social workers, most would be uncomfortable in this role, for instance they might be uneasy in the task of putting forward a case for resources.

Miss Snelling commented that home helps were a valuable resource for the social services department. Quoting the Seebohm Committee Report, she said that a member had commented that the social services department would be in a stronger position within the local authority if it had a resource which other people needed, just as the social services department needed to call on the housing department for help with accommodation. The Seebohm committee suggested that this resource might be the home helps. Therefore more respect should be paid to this section of the service, and when they ask for more assistance their pleas should be considered. They were a precious commodity which it would be easy to spoil if the wrong approach were used in upgrading them, but at the same time they should not be ignored. Miss Guy echoed these

comments. She said that just because home helps cared for the elderly and handicapped it did not mean they should train for social work. There was room within their own group for such people, and there was no reason why they should not be given training, better status and salary while remaining home helps.

elderly and handicapped

The discussion opened into a general debate about training and encouraging people to take an interest in the elderly and handicapped. Miss Guy thought that many young people did in fact enjoy working with these groups, and that it was the educational process itself which deterred people from specialising in this field. Often the academic input concerning ageing and handicaps was poor in terms of method, and was added separately at the end of the course, when it ought to be fully integrated into all the subject areas - human growth and development, sociology and social administration theory and method of social work. Miss Snelling described how the North London Polytechnic tried to encourage enthusiasm among the students for working with the handicapped. Lively young handicapped people were introduced as a panel to students in class so that they could have frank discussions about their problems. This gave students an opportunity to gain a background knowledge of the difficulties these people face, and to ask questions which in any other situation they would be embarrassed to raise. Miss Snelling felt it would be a good idea if the method were extended to include lively old people in discussion groups, and perhaps students would then become more interested in working with them. A member commented that it was the depressed, withdrawn old people that students resisted, not the lively kind that Miss Snelling suggested should join students in discussion. Therefore the students would be presented with a misleading model of old age. She replied that the old people she would tend to select would be those who had a point of view and who would honestly tell students what old age was like, including its problems. Besides, depression was not a handicap of the elderly alone, but of many age groups.

management of social services

The next topic to be discussed was how Mr. Loader's plea for decisive management could be reconciled with training courses which encourage students to think around and through problems, and how the latter could be reconciled with the fact that social services agencies frequently interposed a bureaucratic structure between the field worker and action.

Miss Guy thought that the choice of the word 'reconcile' was unfortunate, as she did not see any reason why these three aspects should be reconciled. People had to act given all kinds of conflicting situations. If students were being taught to affect community policy they had to be shown what alternatives were available, what their affects would be and when to use one type of strategy rather than another. It was the responsibility of educators to help students come to terms with these conflicts.

The comment was then made that in management theory there were two sets of decision making models: the unconstrained situation model and the model

for situations where constraints existed on resources. In the latter it was necessary to optimise on given resources; decisions had to be made regarding, for example, how best to spend the ensuing year's budget and how best to fill an empty bed. Perhaps social workers were using the first model when they ought to be using the second. Perhaps, too, social work educators had a responsibility to teach students strategies for coping with situations where resources were constrained.

decisions

The discussion then developed into a debate on who should make decisions. A conference member said that there were many people whose skills were not properly employed in the social services departments because of their bureaucratic nature. Mr. Loader disagreed, saying that in his experience there was a considerable amount of delegation of decisions, e.g. whether a certain child should be taken into care or which old person is given a bed. The member conceded this, but said that there was rarely delegation on general problems in constrast with individual cases. Mr. Loader thought that over the next few years the delegation of more general decision making would increase, e.g. decisions on whether a proportion of additional resources should go to child care or the elderly.

fields of activity

A participant raised the broad issue of the tension which was bound to exist between the services which society saw itself as wanting and the range of exciting tasks which the professional wanted to carry out. Students had to learn therefore to take political strategies in order to give themselves a chance to exercise their interest in new areas of work. Perhaps, for example, they would have to do some group work in their spare time until the agency and society as a whole came to realise its value. Students must be made aware of the problems of any growing profession.

priorities

A plea for a programme of action regarding priorities for social work educators was then expressed. In considering the task before them which of the following aspects should be tackled and got right first: selection, curriculum content, style and conduct of the course, management of the department, or the strength of the negotiating position (for resources etc.) within the college structure?

Miss Snelling thought it unlikely that anyone would have problems in all these areas, yet most social work educators had problems in some of them. She thought it unlikely that satisfactory solutions could be found for all these areas. Finding themselves in a complex situation of change social work educators should try to isolate those factors which contributed to the situation, which of these might change or be changed first, and which might need a long term strategy or, indeed, be immovable. She thought there was some hope of improvement in some of the areas mentioned at some time, though in a particularly difficult situation the possibility of change might seem to exist in only one area. Nevertheless, if change was made in one area, others might be affected.

Miss Guy described the factors to which the Central Council paid attention when a college set up a course - factors which took account of the inevitability

and desirability of change. A two stage process had been devised for course recognition. First, there was approval in principle, when the Council looked at the physical resources of the institution, after which the college could start appointing staff for the course. Secondly, the Council considered the curriculum, style and conduct of the course, and how its objectives tied in with the content. The problem of selection was a major issue. The Council simply ensured that the college had confidence in what it was looking for in candidates , that this was consistent with the objectives of the course and that the selection procedures were appropriate.

selection

Mr. Loader accepted the close relationship Miss Guy drew between curriculum content and style of conduct of courses. He thought that selection was closely related to course objectives. The kind of professional person an educator wished to produce at the end of a course should be decided before selection, so that the necessary attributes could be looked for in candidates. The importance of selection was echoed in members comments. One said that if selection was done properly, students would raise the style of the course and make worthwhile suggestions about content. Intelligent, purposeful students would also raise the status of the college and help it to attract good resources. Therefore extra time devoted to selection activities would be well spent.

Putting the converse point of view, another member recalled the research findings which Dr. Edwards had described in her paper. Whatever sensible method of selection were used the results would be more or less the same as so much was based on past academic success. Therefore the pay off for time spent on selection rather than, say, curriculum content would not justify it. Dr. Edwards reminded the conference that the research studies had been carried out in the USA and it would be dangerous to infer that the findings applied to the UK, although she thought it quite likely that they would.

part time training

The mode of training was the first topic to be raised when questions from the floor were invited. To what extent did the panel consider part time training relevant to social work education?

The speakers tended to agree that block release could be of value, although day release was, perhaps, less worthwhile. They would like to see both appropriately used in relation to each other. Miss Guy recalled a research study on part-time courses in residential work which revealed clear advantages and disadvantages. The degree to which the employer felt committed to sending his employees for training was shown to be important. If a student was not allowed adequate release from his job for free study as well as for study in college he was put in an impossible situation.

Mr. Loader believed that there was an important difference between a learning environment and a working environment and that it took time for students to adjust from one to another. Therefore it was important that for at least part of the course the student should be able to get away completely from his job. The frequently-found arrangement in which a student beginning a course was in college full time, and later proceeded to a part time mode of study was,

in Mr. Loader's view, probably the best solution.

social work training officers

Mr. Loader was asked to describe the brief of the social work training officers in his authority. He explained that in the new authority there were three training officers and for the majority of the time that they spent in a training mode they were dealing with social work trainees and residential workers, closely followed by unqualified social workers. In addition they did a considerable amount of administrative and advisory work. There were also officers employed in the authority specifically to organise the training for Home Helps.

in-service training

Were any funds available for further training of social workers? Mr. Loader said that in his authority there were limited resources for this purpose but some were channelled into training for residential workers on a day release basis. At one time a whole range of child care courses had been available to field workers under the auspices of the Central Training Council but this unfortunately was no longer the case.

Miss Guy commented that the Council was discussing this issue but nothing concrete had so far been decided as there were so many demands for courses. The Council was, however, committed to the concept of further and advanced educational provision, and hoped that some resources would be forthcoming from those who were demanding such provision. A member warned that at present the social services were relying on older social workers who were experienced in certain specialisms. It was vital that in-service courses were provided so that younger workers could develop specialised skills.

APPENDIX

A new CQSW course developed at the College of Food Technology & Commerce, Cardiff, was described during group discussions by Miss J. Collins, Head of the Department of Social Work. This aroused such interest among conference members that Miss Collins kindly arranged for a paper describing the course to be written by Mr. D.C.G. Davies, a Senior Lecturer in the Department, for the Conference Report.

D C G Davies,
Senior Lecturer,
Department of Social Work, College of Food Technology and Commerce, Cardiff.

AN EXPERIMENT IN SOCIAL WORK TRAINING

A bewildering and changing social work scene, a changing climate of opinion, the changing expectations of students, a continuing expansion and process of reappraisal in social work theory and knowledge, all of these - coupled with a local need to integrate a CSW course with a Child Care course - led the tutors of the Social Work Course at the College of Food Technology and Commerce, Cardiff, to examine and reformulate their pattern of teaching for the 1972-74 CQSW course. The situation demanded radical change - the following is our attempt to formulate a new scheme of teaching to meet that demand.

Three factors above all others influenced our thinking.

1. That the course had remained basically unchanged for nine years and demanded to be brought into the seventies.

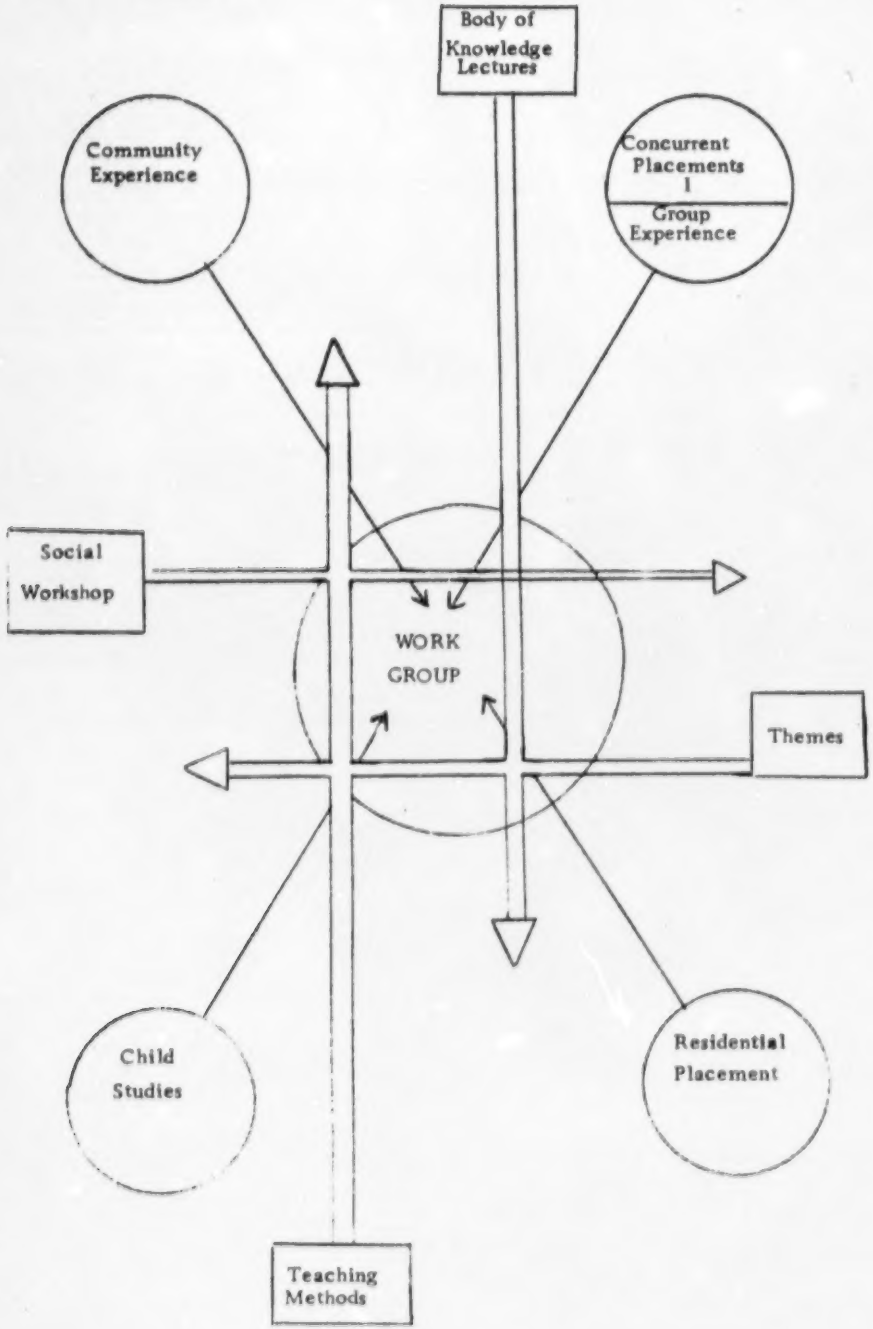
2. That the need to integrate the two courses led to groups of thirty-six students, and one year's experience of such groups had shown us the impossibility of effectively teaching a group of this size using existing methods.

3. That the quality of our raw material - the students - was also changing. In general they were younger, had better academic qualifications, and were more demanding and questioning. They were also, in general, less experienced and more unsure of themselves.

Our concept is a multi-dimensional one and, as such, difficult to represent on a two-dimensional page. The processes of learning go on in different ways and at different levels throughout the two years, and our aim is to create a fabric of learning from the weft and warp of theory and practice. In the attempt to give static form to this essentially dynamic process much is lost. Figure 1, however, is an attempt to illustrate the basis structure at which we are aiming and shows the constituent elements that go to form the fabric of learning on our course.

Throughout this paper we shall assume an intake of thirty-six students.

FIGURE 1.


Body of Knowledge Lectures
Community Experience
Concurrent Placements I
Group Experience
Social Workshop
WORK GROUP
Themes
Child Studies
Residential Placement
Teaching Methods

A. STUDENT GROUPINGS

We distinguish three groupings of students.

1. The Student Group

This consists of the whole yearly intake of students, that is - thirty-six students.

2. The Work Groups

The intake of thirty-six students is divided into three groups of twelve, each group having its own individual tutor. These will be the basic, stable groups which will continue, with their tutors, for the whole of the two year period. These basic groups are called the WORK GROUPS.

3. Lecture Groups

The intake of thirty-six students is also divided into two groups of eighteen. Each eighteen being composed of six students from each of the three Work Groups. These two groups of eighteen are called the LECTURE GROUPS.

(Historical Note:- Initially we started out with the Student Group and the Work Groups only. It was later suggested that this tended to limit the number of inter-student relationships that could be formed. To meet this criticism we instituted the Lecture Groups. The composition of these Lecture Groups affords every Work Group member the opportunity of sitting alongside some members of the other two Work Groups.)

B. BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

The basic subjects continue to be taught by means of lecture or seminar. They are presented to different groupings of students as shown on the following page:-

YEAR	SUBJECT	TEACHING METHOD	Number in Group
lst & 2nd yr	Social Services & Policy	Lecture to Student Group	36
lst yr only	Psychology	Lecture to Student Group	36
lst yr only	Human Growth & Behaviour	Lecture to Student Group	36
2nd yr only	Human Growth & Behaviour	Lecture to Lecture Groups	18
lst & 2nd yr	Sociology	Lecture to Lecture Groups	18
lst yr only	Social History	Seminars with Lecture Group	18
lst & 2nd yr	Social Work Method	Seminars with Work Groups	12
lst yr only	Family Interaction	Seminars with Work Groups	12
lst yr only	Government	Seminars with Work Groups	12
lst yr only	Communication & English Appreciation	Seminars with Work Group	12

(The actual subjects to be included in the Body of Knowledge, the time allocated to subjects, the timing of their introduction to students, all these factors are continually under review. Our aim is flexibility, with the potential to change as experience and circumstance require.)

The first radical change in our method comes in the next stage - the use made of this newly acquired body of knowledge. Each Work Group (Tutor + 12) has as its task the digestion, the discussion, the analysis and the application of the information and ideas obtained from the body of knowledge lectures and seminars. To give form and direction to its deliberations and explorations each Work Group has six themes allocated to it for study over the two years, and is expected to utilise its increasing body of knowledge in their development and exploration. At all times this exploration and development bears in mind the importance of seeing and using their increasing knowledge and skills in terms of:-

(a) The Individual.
(b) The Family.
(c) The Groups to which people belong.
(d) The Community.
(e) Society.

It is one of the major tasks of the tutor to ensure that nothing is seen in isolation but rather in terms of its relevance to, and interaction with, each of one of the above.

The necessary form and structure is maintained by the Work Group's need to focus on their themes, which are allocated to them by means of the "Theme Matrix".

C. THEME MATRIX

One of the basic difficulties of theme teaching is, that to pursue some themes in depth must imply that other themes are not touched on at all, or at best, superficially treated. We think that by our method of theme allocation some of this danger is averted.

The theme matrix is made up of nine themes running vertically (Universal Needs) and nine themes running horizontally (Person Speficic Problems) see Figure 2.

Universal Needs are experienced by all people and we have chosen the following:-

Finances; Accommodation; Care and Attention; Indentity; Interpersonal Relationships; Communication; Education; Employment; Health.

(Obviously this list is by no means definitive)

Person-Specific Problems are problems that affect some individuals at some specific time in their lives, and, from the vast range of possibilities, we have chosen the following:-

Mental Disability; Physical Disability; Social Disability; Problems of Childhood and Youth; Problems of Adulthood; Problems of Old Age; People in Trouble with the Law; People in Crisis; People in Institutions.

(Again this list is obviously not definitive)

From this range of Universal Needs and Person-Specific Problems three distinct programmes each specifying six themes, are mapped out. Figure 2 gives an example of one such programme. (A different programme is mapped out for each of the other two Work Groups.)

D. PLAN IN PRACTICE

Let us assume that Work Group 1 is assigned the programme shown in Figure 2. The intersections marked with ticks indicate the themes to be explored by that Work Group over the two years. It will be in terms of this programme that the Work Group will consider the implications and applicability of the body of knowledge they are acquiring, and the practical experiences they are undergoing.

FIGURE 2. Example of Theme Matrix

PERSON-SPECIFIC PROBLEMS

UNIVERSAL NEEDS	Mental Disability	Physical Disability	Social Disability	Childhood and Youth	Adulthood	Old Age	People in trouble with the law	People in crisis	People in Institutions
Finances	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Accommodation	✓			✓			✓		
Care and Attention	✓			✓			✓		
Identity	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Interpersonal Relationships	✓			✓			✓		
Communication	✓			✓			✓		
Education	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Employment	✓			✓			✓		
Health	✓			✓			✓		

Theme i. Finances

How are one's finances affected by Mental, Social or Physical Disability? What financial problems are specific to the young, the adult, the elderly or to those in trouble with the Law? When do financial affairs precipitate 'crisis'? What is the financial position of residents of institutions? Working from outlines such as these the limits of investigation are determined by the Work Group itself.

Theme ii. Identity

The Work Group has similarly to look at "Identity" in terms of all the person - specific problems

Theme iii. Education

The Work has similarly to look at "Education" in terms of all the person-specific problems.

Theme iv. Mental Disability

How does Mental Disability affect one's finances? What problems of accommodation, care and attention does it raise? What impact does it have on one's identity, one's communication with others? How does it affect one in the fields of Education and Employment? Starting again from such outlines as these the limits of investigation are set by the Work Group itself.

Theme v. Problems of Childhood and Youth

The Work Group has similarly to look at the problems of childhood and youth in terms of all the universal needs.

Theme vi. People in Trouble with the Law.

The Work Group has similarly to look at the problems of people in trouble with the law in terms of all the universal needs.

It can be seen then that Work Group 1 at the end of two years will have studied

1. Finances
2. Identity
3. Education
4. Mental Disability
5. Problems of Childhood and Youth
6. People in trouble with the Law

Whilst the other twelve themes on the Theme Matrix will not have been covered in depth by this Work Group, they will at least have looked at them all in relation to at least three aspects, e.g.

Accommodation

In relation to Mental Disability, Childhood and Youth, and People in trouble with the Law.

Care and Attention

In relation to Mental Disability, Childhood and Youth, and People in trouble with the Law.

Inter-Personal Relationships

In relation to Mental Disability, Childhood and Youth, and People in Trouble with the Law.

Communication

In relation to Mental Disability, Childhood and Youth, and People in Trouble with the Law.

Employment

In relation to Mental Disability, Childhood and Youth, and People in Trouble with the Law.

Physical Disability

In relation to Finances, Identity and Education.

Social Disability

In relation to Finances, Identity and Education.

Adulthood

In relation to Finances, Identity and Education.

Old Age

In relation to Finances, Identity and Education.

People in Crisis

In relation to Finances, Identity and Education

People in Institutions

In relation to Finances, Identity and Education.

At the end of two years Work Group I will therefore have started six themes in depth, and touched upon aspects of the other twelve themes. The themes are seen as starting points or foci, and it is expected that each Work Group will approach each theme in its own way. The boundaries and the scope being set only by the needs, abilities and imagination of the Work Group.

E. The efficient functioning of the Work Group is all important if the outline plan is to be turned into education for social work practice. Each Work Group under the aegis of its tutor, has considerable autonomy, and is expected to play a very active part in the learning process through its discussion groups and seminars. It can break up into sub-groups for many of its activities, and individuals also have an opportunity to develop their own interests - always within the general context of the themes being pursued by their Work Group. The Work Group is also an open ended group with powers to co-opt and to invite Resource Persons from inside or outside the College. It is expected to organise its own film shows, its own visits of observation and its own specialist lectures. Activities of the Work Group are likely to include:-

(a) Films
(b) Specialist Talks
(c) Group Discussions
(d) Seminars
(e) Visits of Observation
(f) Role Playing
(g) Tape Recordings
(h) Construction of Algorithms
(i) Simulation Exercises
(j) Construction of Games.

All the material fed into the Work Group is processed by the Group and seen in terms of its relevance to the individual, the family, the community and society. Complementary themes emanating from different disciplines can be discussed, discrepancies can be explored. The Work Group is a place for integration and synthesis, but it should also be a stimulus to produce original material and to this end we have developed the concept of the Social Workshop.

F. All Work Groups are required periodically to produce some tangible contribution to the general store of knowledge. There is the minimum of directive and it is seen as an opportunity for individuals to research or to ride a hobby horse. The following are indicative of what is being performed.

(a) Preparation of a bibliography on a theme being pursued.
(Group 2. 1972-74 have produced a fully indexed bibliography of literature and pamphlets for their themes of - Finances, Employment, Accommodation and Mental Disability.)

(b) Preparation of a tape illustrating some facet of a theme.

(c) Compilation of a Simulation Exercise.

(d) Devising a game.

(e) Constructing an algorithm.

(f) Preparing Film Slides illustrating a theme.
(Group 3. 1972-74 have produced a series of slides with a taped commentary on the theme of wheelchairs and mobility.)

(g) Producing a cine film illustrating a theme.

(h) Producing a literary/musical anthology illustrating a theme. (Group 1. 1972-74 have produced two anthologies of verse, prose and song, one on "The Outsider" and one on "Alcoholism". Thes have been performed in public to both local and international audiences.)

In summary, the Work Group is a small group, with a fixed (but not rigidly defined) programme of themes, meeting daily, working together or as individuals, to mull over, develop digest and generally apply, or reject, the body of knowledge fed into them both at the College and in their field work placements. A group that is required to do its own "learning work", to hunt out its own material and produce its own results. An open ended group, with powers to co-opt and invite in fresh sources of information. A group which will see the learning process as a whole, encompassing college, field work placement and their own peculiar contribution.

If the programme were confined to the Work Group and its themes there would be a danger of running three separate Social Work Courses. Cross fertilisation is therefore essential and is provided by the following processes:

(a) In some Basic Knowledge Lectures - all three Work Groups present.

(b) In some Basic Knowledge Lectures to "Lecture Groups" - representatives of all three Work Groups present.

(c) Normal socialising within and without college.

(d) The fact that Work Groups are open ended and cross visiting is encouraged.

But in addition our plan provides for the following:-

(e) A periodic FORUM consisting of all three Work Groups at which a paper is presented or a theme thrown open for discussion.

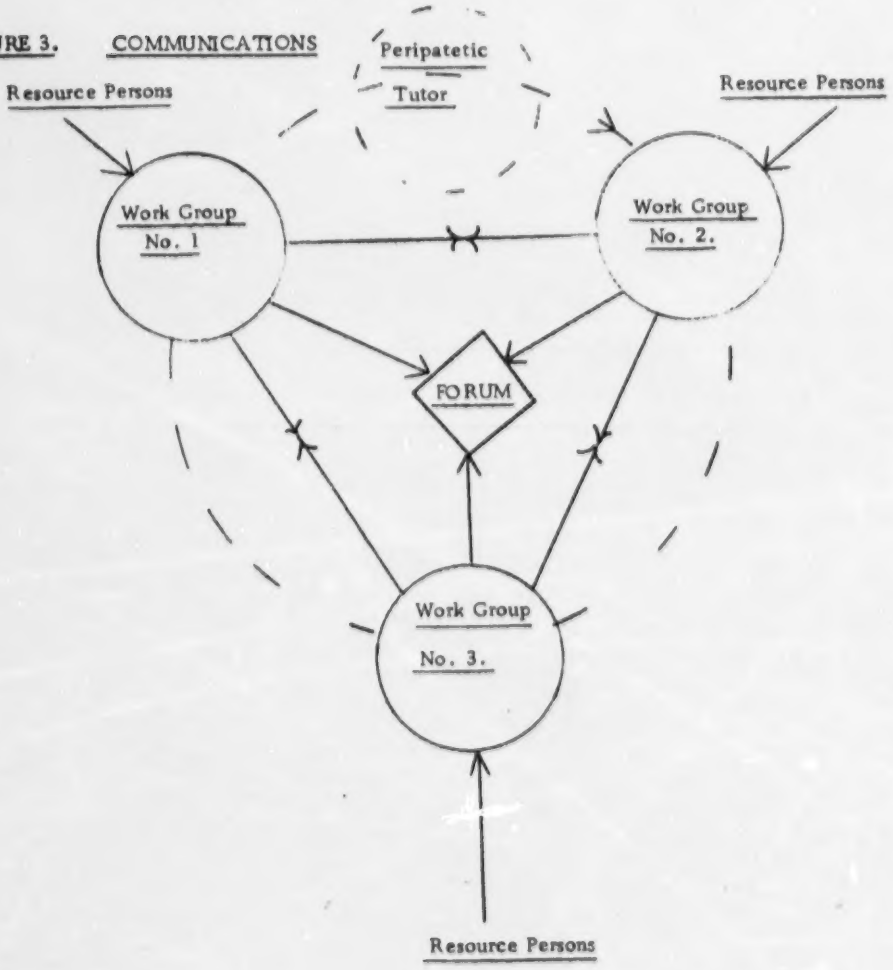
(f) A PERIPATETIC TUTOR who circulates from Work Group to Work Group and so obtains an overall picture of what is going on. (See Figure 3.)

G. AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

So far we have described the work that goes on within the College. In practice, however we know that much of the learning occurs within the field-work placements, and no plan would be complete that does not recognise this fact. Whilst the usual practice of visiting Supervisors and arranging Supervisors meetings will continue we also encourage Training Officers and Supervisors to become closely identified with the Work Groups. The open

endedness of the Work Group facilitates this. In addition the Forum is open to Training Officers and Supervisors. We also make our Staff Room available to agency personnel and offer them membership of our library. We seek to foster a closer and more meaningful partnership in which agency staff is seen to be as much a part of the learning process as the college staff. During our first two years of experimentation we have had varying success with our efforts to involve supervisors and training officers. Some are able to find time to visit the college, others find the pressures of agency work too great to permit them the luxury. In our last year one Work Group invited its supervisors to sit in on their Social Work Method seminars and in their Work Groups. The number of supervisors attending is limited to three at any one session and the experiment has proved to be a marked success. There is obviously room for further experimentation along these lines.

FIGURE 3. COMMUNICATIONS



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